

THE FOLLOWING IS THE SANITIZED NON-CLASSIFIED VERSION OF

TESTIMONY OF [REDACTED]  
BEFORE THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS  
OF THE  
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
CONCERNING THE USE OF THE POLYGRAPH  
AT THE  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

STAT

6 SEPTEMBER 1984  
2:00 P.M.  
ROOM 2212  
RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

MR. CHAIRMAN, MY NAME IS [REDACTED] I AM THE DIRECTOR OF SECURITY FOR THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY, A POSITION I HAVE HELD SINCE 1980. PRIOR TO THAT I HELD VARIOUS SECURITY POSITIONS SINCE JOINING THE AGENCY IN 1951. I BEGAN MY CAREER AT THE AGENCY AS A POLYGRAPH EXAMINER.

STAT

TODAY I'M GOING TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THE POLYGRAPH PROGRAM OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY. AS DIRECTOR OF SECURITY, I SEE THE POLYGRAPH PROGRAM AS ONE PART OF A TOTAL SYSTEM BUILT TO PROTECT THE AGENCY'S SECRET INTELLIGENCE, ITS SOURCES AND ITS METHODS. BUT LET ME STRESS AT THE OUTSET THAT THE POLYGRAPH INTERVIEW IS AN INTEGRAL AND VITAL AND UNIQUE INGREDIENT OF OUR OVERALL SECURITY PROGRAM.

TO BEGIN THE STORY LET ME MAKE THREE IMPORTANT POINTS ABOUT POLYGRAPH:

FIRST: THE POLYGRAPH INTERVIEW IS THE SINGLE MOST EFFECTIVE TOOL AVAILABLE TO DEVELOP AND VERIFY SECURITY-RELATED INFORMATION. THIS ENDORSEMENT IS BASED ON 36 YEARS OF CIA'S INSTITUTIONAL EXPERIENCE WITH THIS TECHNIQUE.

SECOND: THE SUCCESS OF THE AGENCY'S POLYGRAPH PROGRAM HAS BEEN MEASURED OVER THE YEARS IN TERMS OF THE SIGNIFICANT VOLUNTARY ADMISSIONS MADE BY INDIVIDUALS DURING THE COURSE OF POLYGRAPH INTERVIEWS.

THIRD: THE AGENCY'S POLYGRAPH PROGRAM IS FAIR AND PROFESSIONAL IN BOTH CONTENT AND STYLE. IT PROVIDES AN APPROPRIATE BALANCE BETWEEN THE INDIVIDUAL'S CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS AND THE NEED TO PROTECT NATIONAL SECURITY.

NOW A BIT OF HISTORY.

THE AGENCY'S EXPERIENCE WITH THE POLYGRAPH TECHNOLOGY GOES BACK TO 1948 WHEN THE THEN DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE, ADMIRAL HILLENKOEITER, ORDERED A STUDY, USING VOLUNTEERS, OF POLYGRAPH'S POSSIBLE VALUE IN PERSONNEL SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS. BY THE END OF 1948 IT WAS CLEAR THAT SIGNIFICANT PERSONNEL SECURITY INFORMATION, NOT PREVIOUSLY KNOWN, NOR INDEED AVAILABLE FROM ANY OTHER SOURCE, COULD BE DEVELOPED THROUGH POLYGRAPH INTERVIEWS.

IN 1949, THE AGENCY BEGAN TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF USING THE POLYGRAPH TO CHECK ON THE TRUTHFULNESS IN REPORTING BY FOREIGN AGENTS WE WERE USING IN EUROPE AND THE FAR EAST. HERE TOO, WE FOUND THAT THE TECHNIQUE NOT ONLY WORKED, BUT WORKED BRILLIANTLY. BY 1952 THE AGENCY'S OPERATIONAL USE OF THE POLYGRAPH WAS IN EFFECT WORLDWIDE.

FINALLY, IN 1953, THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE, ALLEN DULLES,  
DIRECTED THE UTILIZATION OF POLYGRAPH AS A ROUTINE AND REQUIRED PHASE OF THE SECURITY SCREENING OF APPLICANTS.

NOW, 30 PLUS YEARS LATER, POLYGRAPH INTERVIEWING -- THIS EXTRAORDINARY TECHNIQUE -- STANDS AS A MOST VALUABLE TOOL TO USE IN SUPPORT OF THE AGENCY'S EXTRAORDINARILY SENSITIVE OPERATIONS AND ACTIVITIES.

FROM THE EARLIEST DAYS OF THE POLYGRAPH PROGRAM TO THE MOMENT, ONE OF THE MOST CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ITS CONTINUED SUCCESS HAS BEEN THE CAREFUL SELECTION AND TRAINING OF THE POLYGRAPH EXAMINERS.

POLYGRAPH IS THE MOST DIFFICULT OF ALL SECURITY SPECIALTIES TO RECRUIT FOR. THE STANDARDS ARE VERY HIGH: COLLEGE DEGREES, INTERVIEW SKILLS, EMPATHY WITH ALL TYPES OF PEOPLE AND A PERSONALITY CONDUCIVE TO STIMULATING COMMUNICATIONS.

ON THE TRAINING SIDE, THE AGENCY RUNS ITS OWN POLYGRAPH SCHOOL WHICH IS FULLY AND FORMALLY ACCREDITED BY THE AMERICAN POLYGRAPH ASSOCIATION. THE BASIC POLYGRAPH COURSE IS THREE-MONTHS LONG, FOLLOWED BY A NINE-MONTH INTERNSHIP UNDER INTENSIVE SUPERVISION AND MONITORING. THE OVERALL CURRICULUM FEATURES THESE SPECIALIZED AREAS OF STUDY:

- POLYGRAPH PHYSIOLOGY: THE BODILY REACTIONS TO DECEPTION
- POLYGRAPH PSYCHOLOGY: THE MENTAL REACTIONS TO DECEPTION
- POLYGRAPH INSTRUMENTATION: HOW THE INSTRUMENTATION WORKS
- INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES
- LEGAL ISSUES
- ETHICAL ISSUES.

NO AREA OF SECURITY ADMINISTRATION REQUIRES AND RECEIVES THE SAME DEGREE OF SUPERVISION AND MONITORING AS DOES THE POLYGRAPH PROGRAM. EVERY INTERVIEW IS EVALUATED BY AT LEAST THREE LEVELS OF SUPERVISION BEFORE THE RESULTS ARE CONSIDERED FINAL.

ALL AGENCY POLYGRAPH EXAMINERS OPERATE WITHIN STRICT GUIDELINES THAT ENSURE THAT THE POLYGRAPH SUBJECT UNDERSTANDS THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE INTERVIEW, THE ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED, THE EXACT QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED, AND THE SUBJECT'S CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS IN ALL OF THIS. ALL PROSPECTIVE POLYGRAPH INTERVIEWEES ARE PROTECTED BY AGENCY POLICY THAT REQUIRES THE SUBJECT'S CONSENT IN WRITING, THAT REQUIRES STRICT LIMITS ON DISSEMINATION OF POLYGRAPH-DERIVED INFORMATION AND THAT PROHIBITS POLYGRAPH TESTING WHEN IT APPEARS THAT SUCH TESTING MIGHT AGGRAVATE PHYSICAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS.

THE AGENCY'S POLYGRAPH PROGRAM FOCUSES ON THOSE PERSONNEL SECURITY FACTORS WHICH, OVER TIME, HAVE EMERGED AS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT IN TERMS OF THE THREAT TO AGENCY PERSONNEL, AGENCY FACILITIES, AND AGENCY CLASSIFIED INFORMATION. THE SCOPE OF TESTING CAN VARY FROM FULL COVERAGE OF BOTH COUNTERINTELLIGENCE AND LIFESTYLE ISSUES, TO COUNTERINTELLIGENCE COVERAGE ONLY, OR TO SPECIFIC-ISSUE TESTING ON INDIVIDUAL PROBLEM AREAS OR ALLEGATIONS. BY COUNTERINTELLIGENCE TESTING, I AM REFERRING TO COVERAGE OF SUCH ISSUES AS FOREIGN CONTACTS, FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES, AND MISUSE OR REVELATION OF CLASSIFIED INFORMATION. BY LIFESTYLE TESTING, I AM REFERRING TO COVERAGE OF SUCH ISSUES AS CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES, DRUG ABUSE, DISHONESTY AND EXTREME FINANCIAL VULNERABILITY.

BEFORE IMPLEMENTATION OF ANY NEW TESTING FORMAT, THE QUESTIONS TO BE USED ARE APPROVED BY THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE. EXAMINERS ARE INSTRUCTED ON, AND MUST BE COMPLETELY FAMILIAR WITH, THE TRUE INTENT AND MEANING OF THE QUESTIONS FOR EACH TYPE OF CASE. EXAMINERS MUST BE FULLY

AWARE OF WHICH TOPICS MAY OR MAY NOT BE PURSUED IF THEY SHOULD COME UP DURING THE INTERVIEWS. UNIFORMITY OF PROCEDURE AND COVERAGE IS CRITICAL TO THE AGENCY'S POLYGRAPH PROGRAM, BOTH IN TERMS OF EQUITABLE TREATMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND PROPER FOCUS ON LEGITIMATE AREAS OF SECURITY INTEREST.

BEFORE ADDRESSING SOME OF THE CRITICISMS LEVELED AT THE POLYGRAPH, I WOULD LIKE TO STRESS THAT THE POLYGRAPH IS SEEN BY US AS ESSENTIAL TO DETERMINING THE SECURITY SUITABILITY OF AGENCY APPLICANTS AND EMPLOYEES. THE GRANTING OF A CLEARANCE OR A SECURITY APPROVAL BY THE AGENCY REQUIRES A TOTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL AS A WHOLE PERSON. IT HAS BEEN THE AGENCY'S EXPERIENCE THAT THERE IS NO PERSONNEL SECURITY TOOL AS EFFECTIVE AS THE POLYGRAPH IN DEVELOPING THIS CLEAR, COMPLETE PICTURE.

THE POLYGRAPH TECHNIQUE IS A VERY RELIABLE PROCEDURE. ON A SCALE OF 100, IT WOULD BE RATED IN THE MID TO HIGH 90'S. IN OTHER WORDS, THE RESULTS OF POLYGRAPH TESTING SHOW GREAT CONSISTENCY WITH THE SAME EXAMINER OVER SEVERAL TESTINGS OR GREAT CONSISTENCY FROM EXAMINER TO EXAMINER WITH THE SAME SUBJECT.

THE MATTER OF POLYGRAPH'S VALIDITY IS CONSIDERABLY MORE COMPLEX. FIRST, TO DEFINE THE TERM "VALIDITY" IT MIGHT BE BEST TO DEFINE IT WITH A QUESTION: IS THE POLYGRAPH TESTING FOR AND DETECTING DECEPTION AND NOTHING OTHER THAN DECEPTION? THAT'S THE QUESTION THAT VALIDITY STUDIES ARE TRYING TO DEAL WITH. BUT THIS AREA DEFIES SIMPLISTIC ANSWERS FOR SEVERAL REASONS:

FIRST, POLYGRAPHY IN PRACTICE IS CONSIDERABLY MORE SOPHISTICATED THAN IS RECOGNIZED BY THE MAJORITY OF CRITICS. THOSE OUTSIDE THE FIELD, NOT SCHOoled IN ITS METHODOLOGY, OFTEN PRESUME THAT IT IS A SIMPLE MECHANICAL PROCEDURE RATHER THAN A HIGHLY TECHNICAL PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY. THIS MISCONCEPTION HAS BEEN COMPOUNDED BY THE MEDIA. AS AN ANALOGY, HIGH READINGS ON BLOOD PRESSURE MACHINES, NOW FOUND IN SHOPPING MALLS, ARE NOT PROOF OF A DISEASE. IT TAKES A PHYSICIAN TO ACCURATELY DIAGNOSE ILLNESS.

SECOND, THE LABORATORY STUDIES OF THE POLYGRAPH TEND TO ADDRESS ONLY CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE POLYGRAPH PROCESS. THUS, BROAD GENERALIZATIONS FROM THESE STUDIES QUITE NATURALLY INVITE CONTROVERSY. MOREOVER, LABORATORY SETTINGS, WHERE POLYGRAPH RESEARCH IS DONE, LACK THE MOST CRITICAL ELEMENT OF A REALISTIC POLYGRAPHIC SITUATION AND THAT IS THE REAL-LIFE FEAR OF DETECTION THAT IS PRESENT WHEN A SUBJECT ATTEMPTS TO DECEIVE THE POLYGRAPH EXAMINER ABOUT A MATTER OF IMPORTANCE TO THE SUBJECT.

THIRD, POLYGRAPH TESTING TAKES SEVERAL DIFFERENT FORMS SUCH AS SINGLE-ISSUE TESTING BY, SAY, LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES; EMPLOYEE SCREENING BY PRIVATE INDUSTRY; AND SPECIALIZED TESTING AS PRACTICED BY VARIOUS FEDERAL AGENCIES. ANY GENERALIZATIONS REGARDING THE USE OF THE POLYGRAPH IN ANY ONE OF THESE FORMS WILL NOT APPLY TO ALL FORMS OF POLYGRAPHY.

FOURTH, MANY DISCUSSIONS OF POLYGRAPHY APPEAR TO TAKE PLACE IN AN EMOTIONALLY-CHARGED ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH PARTICIPANTS FREQUENTLY SUPPORT A PRE-DETERMINED VIEWPOINT.

I WOULD PREFER HERE TO CONCENTRATE ON THE AGENCY'S EXPERIENCE WITH THE POLYGRAPH INTERVIEW AND CONCENTRATE ON ITS UTILITY AS A SECURITY TOOL. I AM REFLECTING HERE ON THE AGENCY'S HISTORY WITH THE POLYGRAPH WHICH COVERS 36 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE. I CAN STATE WITHOUT RESERVATION THAT THE POLYGRAPH IS THE MOST PRODUCTIVE AND VALUABLE TECHNIQUE IN THE AGENCY'S PERSONNEL SECURITY AREA. THE POLYGRAPH IS NOT INFALLIBLE AND IT IS NOT A PANACEA. BUT I ASK YOU TO CONSIDER ITS UTILITY AS REFLECTED IN THE FOLLOWING:

IN 1982, THE POLYGRAPH INTERVIEW DEVELOPED SIGNIFICANT INFORMATION NOT SURFACED BY OTHER SCREENING TECHNIQUES IN:

- 70 PERCENT OF THE ENTRANCE-ON-DUTY CASES.
- 25 PERCENT OF THE PROBATIONARY CASES.
- 31 PERCENT OF THE REINVESTIGATION CASES, AND
- 43 PERCENT OF THE INDUSTRIAL CASES.

BEAR IN MIND THAT THESE STATISTICS REPRESENT THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW INFORMATION OF SECURITY SIGNIFICANCE, NOT NECESSARILY CLEARANCE DENIAL NOR CLEARANCE REVOCATION.

AS ANOTHER PIECE OF EVIDENCE, LET ME COMMENT ON A PERSONNEL SECURITY STUDY DONE IN 1980 BY THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE SECURITY COMMITTEE. THE STUDY INVOLVED 507 SECURITY CLEARANCE CASES COMPLETED OVER A FOUR-MONTH PERIOD FROM OCTOBER 1979 TO FEBRUARY 1980. ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY OF THESE CASES DID NOT INVOLVE THE POLYGRAPH: 327 CASES DID INVOLVE THE POLYGRAPH.

IN THE 180 CASES IN WHICH THE POLYGRAPH WAS NOT USED, SECURITY RELEVANT INFORMATION WAS FOUND IN 37, OR 20.5 PERCENT OF THE CASES. IN THE 327 CASES IN WHICH THE POLYGRAPH WAS USED, SECURITY RELEVANT INFORMATION WAS FOUND IN 199, OR 60.8 PERCENT OF THE CASES. THE DIFFERENCE IS DRAMATIC AND, TO MY MIND, STRONG TESTIMONY TO THE POLYGRAPH'S EFFECTIVENESS IN SECURITY SCREENING PROGRAMS.

OVER RECENT YEARS THE VAST MAJORITY OF CIA SECURITY DISAPPROVALS HAVE RESULTED FROM POLYGRAPH-DERIVED INFORMATION. WITHOUT THE POLYGRAPH, HUNDREDS OF INDIVIDUALS WHO DO NOT MEET SECURITY STANDARDS WOULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN ACCESS TO THE NATION'S MOST SENSITIVE SECRETS.

THE MOST IMPORTANT POINT TO MAKE ABOUT CIA SECURITY DISAPPROVAL CASES IS THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF THEM ARE BASED ON INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE INDIVIDUAL DURING THE COURSE OF THE POLYGRAPH INTERVIEW. IT IS ALMOST INVARIABLY THE INFORMATION FROM THE SUBJECT THAT LEADS TO THE SECURITY DISAPPROVALS AND NOT THE TRACINGS ON THE POLYGRAPH CHARTS, REVIEWED WITH THE

OUR STATISTICS INDICATE ONLY 2.5 PERCENT OF ALL CIA POLYGRAPH CASES INVOLVE "CALLED DECEPTION" WITHOUT ANY CORROBORATING ADMISSIONS BY THE SUBJECT.

THE AGENCY'S POLYGRAPH PROGRAM HAS BEEN CAREFULLY DESIGNED TO ENSURE AN EQUITABLE BALANCE BETWEEN THE NEED OF THE AGENCY TO OBTAIN AND VERIFY INVESTIGATIVE INFORMATION AND THE NEED TO ASSURE PROTECTION TO THE INDIVIDUAL.

THE AGENCY DOES NOT POLYGRAPH U. S. PERSONS WITHOUT THEIR WRITTEN CONSENT. EACH INDIVIDUAL MUST SIGN A CONSENT FORM BEFORE THE POLYGRAPH TEST IS ADMINISTERED. THIS CONSENT FORM ENSURES THAT:

- THE INDIVIDUAL KNOWS OF HIS OR HER RIGHTS AGAINST SELF-INCRIMINATION UNDER THE FIFTH AMENDMENT.
- THE INDIVIDUAL KNOWS THAT INFORMATION RELATED TO NATIONAL SECURITY OR TO VIOLATIONS OF LAW MAY BE REPORTED TO APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES.
- THE INDIVIDUAL KNOWS THAT THE POLYGRAPH INTERVIEW MAY BE MONITORED AND/OR RECORDED TO ENSURE ACCURACY AND COMPLIANCE WITH THESE SAFEGUARDS.

CAREFULLY DELINEATED PROCEDURES ALSO ENSURE THAT THE QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED DURING THE EXAMINATION ARE LIMITED TO THOSE NECESSARY TO RESOLVE SECURITY ISSUES. NO QUESTIONS ARE ASKED WHICH DO NOT HAVE SECURITY IMPLICATIONS. EACH OF THE QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED IS REVIEWED WITH THE SUBJECT PRIOR TO THE EXAMINATION. THE INDIVIDUAL IS AFFORDED AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE KNOWN IN ADVANCE ANY RELEVANT INFORMATION THAT MIGHT AFFECT HIS OR HER ANSWER TO THE QUESTION. THE INDIVIDUAL, OF COURSE, MAY TERMINATE THE POLYGRAPH INTERVIEW AT ANY TIME.

WHEN A POLYGRAPH INTERVIEW RESULTS IN EVIDENCE OF SERIOUS SECURITY, COUNTERINTELLIGENCE OR LAW ENFORCEMENT CONCERN, THIS INFORMATION IS STRICTLY CONTROLLED ACCORDING TO EXECUTIVE ORDERS AND IS RELEASED ONLY WITH THE APPROVAL IN WRITING OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE.

UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDER 12333, EVIDENCE OF SERIOUS FEDERAL CRIMES SUCH AS ESPIONAGE, TREASON OR PRESIDENTIAL ASSASSINATION IS REPORTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

POLYGRAPH INFORMATION IS ALSO RELEASED IN A LIMITED AND CONTROLLED FASHION IN THE COURSE OF NATIONAL AGENCY CHECKS PERFORMED PURSUANT TO EXECUTIVE ORDER 10450. OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES WITH NATIONAL SECURITY RESPONSIBILITIES MAY RUN SECURITY CHECKS ON ONE OF THEIR APPLICANTS AND ASK THE AGENCY WHETHER WE HAVE INFORMATION ON THAT INDIVIDUAL. IN THE EVENT THAT WE HAVE POLYGRAPHED THIS PERSON, WE COMMUNICATE THE RESULTS OF THE INTERVIEW FOR LEAD PURPOSES IF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BELIEVES THIS INFORMATION IS APPROPRIATE TO PASS IN THE INTEREST OF NATIONAL SECURITY.

THE STATISTICS CITED EARLIER SPEAK CONVINCINGLY FOR THE UTILITY OF THE POLYGRAPH PROCESS. I CERTAINLY HAVE NO ARGUMENT WITH THOSE WHO WISH TO SEE MORE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ON POLYGRAPH, BUT I DO HAVE GREAT DIFFICULTY WITH THOSE WHO CONCLUDE THAT THIS PROCESS DOES NOT WORK OR THAT IT IS TOO LITTLE UNDERSTOOD TODAY EVEN TO BE USED.

IN CLOSING, I WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASIZE OUR USE AND EXPERIENCE WITH THE POLYGRAPH OVER THE PAST THREE-AND-A-HALF DECADES. WE HAVE FOUND THAT WITH CAREFULLY-CHOSEN EXAMINERS AND A THOUGHTFULLY-STRUCTURED AND TIGHTLY-CONTROLLED PROGRAM, THE POLYGRAPH IS AN EXTREMELY EFFECTIVE TOOL IN PROTECTING THE AGENCY FROM UNSUITABLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WOULD

CLEARLY POSE AN UNACCEPTABLE SECURITY RISK. AT THE SAME TIME, THE POLYGRAPH HAS BEEN VERY USEFUL IN REINVESTIGATION EFFORTS BY DETECTING A SMALL NUMBER OF AGENCY EMPLOYEES WHO BECAME SECURITY RISKS AFTER ENTERING ON DUTY. FINALLY, THE POLYGRAPH HAS EXONERATED SOME AGENCY EMPLOYEES WHO WERE ALLEGED TO HAVE COMMITTED SOME SORT OF WRONGDOING.

I HOPE THAT MY REMARKS WILL BE USEFUL TO YOU DURING YOUR DELIBERATIONS.

THANK YOU.

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